Policy Council Meeting

9-24-24

Submitted by: Karina Garza & Kerry Mehling

**Members Present:** Vanessa Gleason, Sydni Closson, Shayna Hudson, Dehlia Cardona, Tiffany Hogsett, Brittain Reinmuth, Jessica Brenizer, Alexis Griner, Maria Garcia, Adriana Gonzales, Karina Garza

**Staff Present**: Lauren Starke, Kerry Mehling, Krystie Hohnstein

**Board Members Present:** Tom Millette

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Alexis at 6:08p.m. New member introductions were made. Members reviewed the minutes from the August meeting. **Tiffany moved to approve the August minutes. Adriana seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

**Director Report:**

All members received copy of the Director’s report. Krystie Hohnstein discussed the report. The program is continuing to work on reaching full enrollment. One opening remains at Bridgeport in the EHS classroom and there are 2 slots open in our partnership districts. Many screenings are in progress to meet the 45-day and 90-day requirements and data entry is occurring as those are completed. The 1st bus evacuation was completed on 9-5-24. The one-time funds applied for through the Office of Head Start (OHS) were approved and will be utilized for enhancement of the mental health services within the program. The new Head Start Program Performance Standards were released and the management team is engaging in several webinars to discuss the changes in the standards and work on service delivery to ensure all are met within the prescribed guidelines. The in-kind report shows that so far, we are ahead on contributions this year.

**Finance Report:**

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. Expenses are up a little more with all classrooms in operation. Staff received their cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in August along with the back-pay that is required when a COLA is awarded. T/TA budgets look good and the administrative percentage remains in an acceptable range. **Adriana moved to approve the finance report. Tiffany seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

**Board Report:**

Updates about the one-time funding award and the request to dispose of a bus. ESU13 financial audit is coming up in November and the 2024-25 budget was approved.

**Old Business:**

**Updates on the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Grant were provided:** No feedback received.

**Updates on the Head Start One-Time Funding Application were provided:** Funding has been approved.

**New Business:**

**Incident Report/RAN (Risk Assessment Notification) Review** – The program had to file an incident report to the office of Head Start due to a safety incident that took place at one of our locations after a child was left unsupervised on the playground. After the report is received by the Regional Office, it is sent on to OHS. An investigation was completed at the program level with review and updates to policies and procedures, along with staff meetings to ensure understanding and implementation. An official meeting with the Region 7 specialist will occur on Oct. 2nd to review these updates and procedures and to ensure adequate response so that this does not ever occur again. Krystie discussed some of the measures that have been put in place with the staff at this location to assist with resolving this issue. Ongoing updates will be provided to the Policy Council as these meetings are completed.

**October Policy Council Training & Meeting/Center Elections:** Centers are in the election process for representation for the 2024-2025 school year. The October Policy Council Training is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 29th from 4-8pm. It is mandatory that representatives and proxies attend. Returning members are allowed to attend just the meeting portion of the schedule from approximately 5:45pm-8:00pm.

**Continuation Grant (Due December 2024):** The program is completing year 5 of the current grant cycle and will begin working on the next 5-year grant cycle, strategic plans and service offerings. The program is not expecting any major service changes. Members are encouraged to ask questions and offer suggestions as the grant writing process begins. Krystie briefly presented the new 5-year goals (strategic plans) that the management team worked on last spring for the new project period.

**Bus Disposition:** The program has submitted paperwork to request to dispose of a bus that is not in use and is very old. Members will be kept up to date on the status of this process.

**Employment Openings** - Agency-wide employment openings are located on the ESU13 website ([www.esu13.org](http://www.esu13.org)) under *Employment Openings*. Prospective Employees can also apply directly on this site. The website was visible to members for review of current open positions.

**New Hires:**

Aleenna DeCosta Connelly – HS Assistant Teacher @ Bridgeport. FT, 9-month position. **­­­­­­­­­­­­Adriana moved to approve the new hires. Maria seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

**Celebration of Members & Return Policy Council Binders for Updates:** A huge thank-you to all of our 2023-2024 Policy Council members for their commitment and service this year! Members all received a HS cup and key chain for supporting ESU13 Head Start Programs in such an incredible way!

**Center Reports:** Bayard, EHS & HS ELC, Gering (Geil, Northfield, and Lincoln).

Meeting adjourned at 7:00p.m.